(d) The Prime Minister held discussions? with the Chief Ministers of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry on issues relating to Cauvery waters on 17-2-1992. The States agreed to facilitate expeditious completion of all proceeding before the Tribunal.

Ground Water exploration

1614. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAV1A: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Ground Water Board has drawn up any ground water exploration programmes in various States during the Eighth Five Year Plan ;

(b) if so, the broad features thereof: and

(c) the details of the areas likely to be covered in such States ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under its Exploratory Drilling Programme, the Central Ground Water Board has drawn up a plan to drill 5330 boreholes in various States and Union Territories, during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

(c) A total of 330 boreholes are likely to be drilled in bouldary rock formation areas in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. About 2000 boreholes are likely to be drilled in alluvial rock formation areas covering largely the States of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Manipur and Punjab. About 3000 boreholes are likely to be drilled in hard rock areas covering the States of Andhra Pradesh Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Atrocities of SC/ST women in Assam

1615. SHRI BHADRESHWAR BURAGOHAJN : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of atrocities on women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were reported during the last year in Assam ; and

(b) if so, the details of such cases and the action taken against the guilty ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected from the State Government of Assam and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Grievances of SC migrants

1616. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Estimates Committee made positive recommendations twice during 1978-79 and 1980-81 that the long standing grievances of the Scheduled Caste migrants should be urgently removed by enacting a separate legislation for according them the necessary recognition;

(b) if so, the reasons for which Government are repeating the same old point of linking this matter with the question of 'comprehensive' revision of SC and ST orders when a separate legislation could be enacted earlier (1990) for recognitaion of SC converts to Buddhism as SCs; and

(c) whether a separate legislation would be brought forward during the current session for the SC migrants also ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In accordance with Article 341(2) of the Constitution, after due consultation with the State Governments/U.T. Administrations inclusion of any community in the existing lists of Scheduled Castes can be considered. Such communities should also fulfil the criterion of extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of traditional practice of untouchabi-lity. The Scheduled Castes converts to Buddhism are deemed to be members of

the Scheduled Castes. This does not require consultation with the State Governments/ *4* U.T. Administrations as there is no fresh inclusion of communities in the existing' lists of Scheduled Castes.

(c) No specific time-limit can be given.

Upliftment of Backward Classes

1617. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any plans and programmes under consideration of Government to uplift the status of Backward Classes; and

(0) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER Or WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) and (b) The Government of India, vide OM datid 13th August, 1990 and OM dated 25th September, 1991 have provided reservation of 27% of the vacancies in civil posts and services to be filled by direct recruitment under the Government of India for Socially, Educationally Backward Classes. Preference will be given to candidates belonging to the poorer sections of the SEBCs. In case sufficient number of such candidates are not available, unfilled vacancies shall be filled by the other SEBC candidates.

National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation has been incorporated on 13-1-1992 as a company not for profit under Section 25 of the Companies, Act, 1956 with an authorised share capital of Rs. 200 Crores. It has a Paid up capital of Rs. 25 Crores. The objectives of the Corporation are reproduced below :—

(i) to promote economic & developmental activities for the benefit of Backward Classes;

(ii) to assist, subject to such income and/or economic criteria as may be prescribed by the Government from time to time, individuals or group; of individuals belonging to Backward Classes by way of loans and advances for economically and financially viable schemes and projects ;

(iii) to promote self-employment and other ventures for the benefit of Backward Classes;

(iv) to grant concessional finances in selected cases for persons belonging to Backward Classes below the poverty line in the country in collaboration with the Government/ Ministries/Departments at the National and State Level to the extent of the budgetary assistance granted by the Government of India to the Company;

(v) to extend loans for pursuing general/ professional/ technical education or training at graduate and higher levels ;

(vi) to assist in the upgradation of technical and entero-reneurial skills of Backward Classes for proper and efficient management of production units ;

(vii) to assist the State level organisation to deal with the development of backward classes by way of providng financial assistance and in obtaining commercial funding by way of refinancing;

(viii) to work as an apex institutions for coordination and monitoring the work of all Corporations/Boards set up by the State Government/UT Administrations for SC/ST, Backward Oases and Minorities in so as far as it relates to the economic development of the backward classes.

(ix) to help in furthering the Government policies and programmes for the development of the backward classes.

Catholic Relief Services

1618. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the Catholic Relief Services, New Delhi